

Message Text

SECRET

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46

ACTION EA-10

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R 131217Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8331

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

AMCONSUL UDORN

S E C R E T BANGKOK 17940

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

UDORN FOR AMBASSADOR KINTNER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH, LA

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN'S VISIT TO LAOS

REF: BANGKOK 17885

1. DURING MY MEETING WITH THAI FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN ON NOVEMBER 13, I ASKED ABOUT PRESS REPORTS THAT SOUPHANOUVONG REQUESTED DURING CHARUNPHAN'S RECENT TRIP TO LAOS THAT U.S. MILITARY FORCES BE REMOVED FROM THAILAND. CHARUNPHAN SAID PRESS REPORTING ON THIS PORTION OF HIS DISCUSSIONS WITH SOUPHANOUVONG WAS GENERALLY ACCURATE (BANGKOK 17862). HOWEVER, THERE WAS ONE ADDITIONAL FACTOR WHICH HE HAD NOT MENTIONED TO THE PRESS.

2. DURING THEIR DISCUSSIONS ON THIS TOPIC, SOUPHANOUVONG DID NOT REFER TO U.S. FORCES IN GENERAL BUT CONCENTRATED SPECIFICALLY ON U.S. TROOPS AT NAKHON PHANOM. SOUPHANOUVONG ARGUED THAT THESE FORCES AND THE USSAG HEADQUARTERS HAD BEEN
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MOVED FROM SAIGON TO NAKHON PHANOM AFTER THE PARIS AGREE-

MENTS, THAT THIS WAS "NOT PROPER" AND THAT THAILAND SHOULD ASK IMMEDIATELY FOR THE REMOVAL OF THESE FORCES.

3. CHARUNPHAN SAID HE REPLIED THAT THE ROYAL THAI GOVERNMENT HAS HAD CONTINUING DISCUSSIONS WITH THE USG ON THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE. AS A RESULT OF THESE TALKS, ARRANGEMENTS WERE MADE EARLY THIS YEAR FOR THE WITHDRAWAL DURING THE COURSE OF THE YEAR OF SOME 10,000 PERSONNEL AND "HUNDREDS OF PLANES." ANOTHER U.S.-THAI REVIEW OF THE SITUATION WILL BE HELD TOWARD THE END OF THIS YEAR LOOKING TOWARD THE POSSIBILITY OF FURTHER WITHDRAWALS. THESE WOULD, HOWEVER, DEPEND ON THE SECURITY SITUATION IN THE AREA AT THAT TIME.

4. CHARUNPHAN SAID HE ALSO MADE THE POINT THAT THAILAND SUPPORTS THE COALITION GOVERNMENT AND WOULD LIKE TO SEE ALL NATIONS RESPECT THE TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY OF LAOS. CHARUNPHAN SAID HE STRESSED IN PARTICULAR THE FACT (WITHOUT NAMING NAMES) THAT NO COUNTRY SHOULD HAVE FOREIGN FORCES IN LAOS. CHARUNPHAN SAID THE GENERAL THAI-LAO SITUATION WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN GREATER DETAIL IN THE FORTHCOMING WORKING LEVEL TALKS BETWEEN OFFICIALS OF THE TWO NATIONS.

5. CHARUNPHAN NOTED THAT SANO UNAKUN, HEAD OF THE NATIONAL ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD, WOULD WORK WITH THE THAI DELEGATION TO THESE TALKS IN CONSIDERING WAYS IN WHICH THAILAND MIGHT HELP THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF LAOS. I SAID THAT, IF THE RTG WISHED, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO PASS SOME IDEAS TO SANO FROM OUR AMBASSADOR AND ECONOMIC AID MISSION IN VIENTIANE. CHARUNPHAN WELCOMED THIS SUGGESTION AND URGED THAT WE DO SO.

6. FOR VIENTIANE: IF YOU BELIEVE THIS WOULD BE USEFUL, PLEASE LET US HAVE YOUR IDEAS, WHICH WE WILL PASS TO THE THAI, ON BEST USE TO MAKE OF 15 MILLION BAHT FUND RTG HAS APPROVED TO HELP LAOS' ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.
KINTNER

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